

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An electronic silent auction system comprises:  
a first local client presenting an auction display  
at an auction;  
5 a second local client presenting the auction display  
at the auction; and  
a local network device operable to receive one or  
more unique bids on an item from each local client and  
communicate the received bids to a server, the item  
10 described in a central repository on the server and the  
server operable to determine a winning bid for the item  
based on predetermined criteria.
2. The system of Claim 1, wherein each local  
15 client is communicably coupled to the local network  
device via a wireless connection.
3. The system of Claim 1, the server comprising a  
remote server.  
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4. The system of Claim 1, each local client and  
the local network device co-located at an auction site.
5. The system of Claim 1, the central repository  
25 storing a description for each of a plurality of items  
operable to be bid on by each client, each item  
associated with an electronic bidsheet stored at the  
server.

6. The system of Claim 5, each bidsheet comprising the one or more bids on the associated item and the highest bid comprising a current winning bid.

5        7. The system of Claim 1, each client comprising a graphical user interface operable to process an identifier of a user to associate with the bid.

10       8. The system of Claim 7, the identifier of the user comprising a card number and each client communicably coupled with a card reader operable to process a card associated with the card number.

15       9. The system of Claim 1, wherein the server operable to determine a winning bid for the item based on predetermined criteria comprises the server operable to determine a highest bid on the item within a predetermined time after the beginning of the auction.

20       10. The system of Claim 1, wherein the server operable to determine a winning bid for the item based on predetermined criteria comprises the server operable to determine a highest bid on the item after determining that no new bids have been received for a pre-determined  
25       amount of time.

11. A method for providing an electronic silent auction comprises:

receiving a first bid for an item from a first local client at an auction, the item described in a central repository on a server;

receiving a second bid for the item from a second local client at the auction, the second bid greater than the first bid; and

communicating each bid to the server for processing, the server operable to determine a winning bid for the item based on predetermined criteria.

12. The method of Claim 11 further comprising receiving each bid via a wireless connection.

13. The method of Claim 11, the server comprising an offsite server.

14. The method of Claim 11 further comprising receiving each bid for the item at an auction site.

15. The method of Claim 11, the central repository storing a description for each of a plurality of items operable to be bid on by each client, each item associated with an electronic bidsheet stored at the server.

16. The method of Claim 15, each bidsheet comprising the one or more bids on the associated item and the highest bid comprising a current winning bid.

17. The method of Claim 11, each client comprising a graphical user interface operable to receive an identifier of a user.

5        18. The method of Claim 17, the identifier of the user comprising a card number and each client communicably coupled with a card reader operable to process a card associated with the card number.

10       19. The method of Claim 11, wherein the server operable to determine a winning bid for the item based on predetermined criteria comprises the server operable to determine a highest bid on the item within a predetermined time after the beginning of the auction.

15       20. The method of Claim 11, wherein the server operable to determine a winning bid for the item based on predetermined criteria comprises the server operable to determine a highest bid on the item after determining  
20       that no new bids have been received for a pre-determined amount of time.

21. Software for providing an electronic silent auction operable to:

receive a first bid for an item from a first client through a network device, the item described in a central repository;

receive a second bid for the item from a second client through the network device, the second client co-located with the first client and the network device; and

process the received bids to determine a winning bid for the item based at least partially on predetermined criteria.

22. The software of Claim 21, further operable to receive each bid through the network device via a wireless connection.

23. The software of Claim 21, the co-located clients being located remotely.

24. The software of Claim 23, the remote location comprising an auction site.

25. The software of Claim 21, the central repository storing a logical description for each of a plurality of items operable to be bid on by each client, each item associated with an electronic bidsheet stored in the central repository.

26. The software of Claim 25, each bidsheet comprising the one or more bids on the associated item and the highest bid comprising a current winning bid.

27. The software of Claim 21 further operable to associate a client identifier with each bid, the identifier received at the client.

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28. The software of Claim 27, receiving the client identifier through a card reader communicably coupled with the client.

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29. The software of Claim 21 further operable to:  
receive a third bid for the item from the first client through the network device, the third bid greater than the first or second bids; and

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communicate an outbid message to the second client through the network device in response to the third message.

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30. The software of Claim 29, the outbid message comprising a prompt to the second client to communicate a fourth bid.

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31. The software of Claim 21, wherein the software operable to determine a winning bid for the item based at least partially on predetermined criteria comprises software operable to determine a highest bid on the item within a predetermined time after the beginning of the auction.

32. The software of Claim 21, wherein the software operable to determine a winning bid for the item based at least partially on predetermined criteria comprises software operable to determine a highest bid on the item  
5 after determining that no new bids have been received for a pre-determined amount of time.

33. A method for performing an electronic silent auction comprising:

automatically initializing a silent auction for a plurality of items, the items described in a central repository;

processing at least one electronic bet on a particular one of the plurality of items; and

automatically ending the silent auction based on predetermined criteria.

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34. The method of Claim 33, wherein automatically ending the silent auction based on predetermined criteria comprises automatically ending the silent auction at a predetermined period of time from the initialization of the silent auction.

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35. The method of Claim 33, further comprising determining a first count of bids processed during a first predetermined amount of time from the initialization of the silent auction and wherein automatically ending the silent auction based on predetermined criteria comprises automatically ending the silent auction if the first count is not greater than a first predetermined number.

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36. The method of Claim 35, if the first count is greater than the first predetermined number, the method further comprising determining a second count of bids processed during a second predetermined amount of time from the end of the first predetermined amount of time and wherein automatically ending the silent auction based on predetermined criteria comprises automatically ending the silent auction if the second count is not greater than a second predetermined number.

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37. The method of Claim 33, further comprises:

accepting for processing at least one electronic bet on the particular one of the plurality of items during a first predetermined amount of time from the initialization of the silent auction;

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determining a first count of bids processed during a second predetermined amount of time from the end of the first predetermined amount of time; and

wherein automatically ending the silent auction based on predetermined criteria comprises automatically ending the silent auction if the first count is not greater than a first predetermined number.

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